



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 10, 2013

Contact: Lisa Richardson, 213-361-6980

Email: lrichardson@bos.lacounty.gov

Contact: Lorenza Munoz, 213-458-6279

Email: lmunoz@bos.lacounty.gov

SUPERVISORS RIDLEY-THOMAS AND KNABE URGE COUNTY TO FILE FEDERAL COURT BRIEFS TO SUPPORT STATE PRISON COMPROMISE

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas and Supervisor Don Knabe called on the county to take legal action to support a compromise to reduce the state's prison population reached by Gov. Jerry Brown and the leaders of the state Legislature.

Brown, California Senate Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg and Speaker of the Assembly John Perez came to an agreement Monday, offering to spend more money on rehabilitation efforts if a panel of federal judges will extend an end-of-the-year deadline to release thousands of inmates.

In a motion read into the record Tuesday at the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting and to be voted on next week, Supervisors Knabe and Ridley-Thomas also call for the board to direct county counsel to file briefs in federal court to support efforts to truncate the prison pipeline through increased rehabilitation services.

The state is under federal court order to reduce its prison population by December, and the agreement calls for allocating a portion of the \$800 million slated for leasing cells in private prisons over three years, instead to drug, mental health and rehabilitation programs, if the court permits.

Since the state government shifted oversight of nonviolent prison parolees to local county governments in October 2011, Los Angeles and other counties have struggled to balance public safety concerns while meeting the rehabilitative needs of thousands of

prison parolees. A significant increase in that population, which could occur should the federal courts not accept the compromise and insists on the release of approximately 9,000 inmates, would pose significant public safety and other challenges for local governments.

“This compromise is to be applauded,” said Ridley-Thomas, chairman of the board of supervisors. “From a policy perspective we simply cannot continue to over-utilize incarceration as our sole public safety solution. It’s not practical, it’s not economical and it’s not moral. Reducing our prison population and halting recidivism will require us to adopt strategies for rehabilitation as well.”

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